

Guide: Spring 2020 Weekly Virtual Council Meetings

This is our guide for running virtual council calls during this tumultuous coronavirus pandemic. We have a page with more resources around [holding virtual meetings on the Mod Information site](#) but this guide is meant to help with short term planning for the Spring 2020 meeting.

Prep

1. Leverage your 1:1 calls to define the agenda for each week - send out the agenda in advance so members can come prepared to share, we anticipate these weekly meetings to cover 1-2 topics, that could include:
 - a. RFHs (e.g., how to run sprints with everyone virtual)
 - b. Case studies (e.g., How Evite quickly pivoted the company amidst the crisis)
 - c. Round robins (e.g. Tools for holding virtual happy hours, Favorite things)
 - d. Skill share (e.g. an advanced feature of Zoom or something you've learned that will help all your members)
2. Maintain a running topic list and leverage lean coffee (see below) as needed
 - a. Have your discussion sheet ready to go and to put the link into the chat if/when you want members to vote to prioritize
3. Decide how to engage the group by using Zoom features - leverage one or more in each meeting
 - a. Poll (optional) - create a poll (optional) that you can run at the end of the call (more below)
 - b. Breakout rooms - consider using breakouts if you have multiple topics that relate to subsets of your groups.
 - c. Reactions
 - d. Whiteboard
 - e. Screenshare
4. Establish agreements for your Council, for example:
 - a. Protect the time / show up consistently for yourself and your fellow council members
 - b. Video on - use Gallery view to see the whole group
 - c. Don't worry about being 'camera ready' - no need to dress up/worry about background/etc., kids will be around, animals, it's all OK
 - d. Stay Focused - remove distractions, close out other tech/apps
 - e. Lean In - listen closely, ask questions, share, challenge, no sitting back
 - f. Have Fun - we'll weave in some fun/personal conversations and different ways of engaging throughout the 9 weeks
 - g. In addition to our standard agreements around: Confidentiality, Authenticity, Balance, Curiosity

Recommended Meeting Structure

- Review Agenda (5 mins)
Note: You can use lean coffee for this if you want member input on priority of topics
- Quick Health/problem sanity check (1-5 mins)
Before we start I'd like to just ask: is anyone dealing with a tough personal problem related to the pandemic...?
- 1-2 Topics (45 mins)
- Agenda for Next Meeting (5 mins) - vote on (lean coffee) or review agenda for the next session

Kickoff/First Meeting

In the first meeting of this series, please make sure to:

- Introduce new members (since the last in person or virtual meeting)
- Round Robin: Check-in/catch up (e.g., what has been the biggest change for you in the last month? (personal or professional)
- Review/define Council agreements
- Review commitments from last meeting (optional)

Agenda Staples - try to weave these into your agenda over the next 9 weeks:

- I recommend...movies, games, apps
- Personal connection round robins (see Hope's doc on Slack)
- Fun / virtual games - depending on your Council's appetite for this
- Commitments - at the end, wrap up, may ask them to share at the beginning

Abbreviated Lean Coffee

Lean coffee is an approach for quickly aggregating and prioritizing discussion topics. This exercise should take about 5 minutes to complete.

- Create a list of topics using this template (populated based on 1:1 calls): [insert template]
- Share a link to the Topic list sheet in chat (may need to do this multiple times as late joiners can't see the previous chats)
- Ask members to add to and review the topic spreadsheet AND to vote -- everyone gets 3 votes (give folks a few minutes to do this)
- Once people have voted, sort the total column Z--A
- Announce the agenda:
 - We will discuss X topic from Lean Coffee
 - And have a [round robin, RFH, case study]

Leading a Topic / Discussion

We anticipate that Councils will be able to cover 1-2 topics per session (maybe more if the topics are smaller, maybe less if bigger)

Phil typically uses the following approach on PCC calls to organize a discussion:

- Set the stage (1-5 mins): Leading member (one person)
- Ask clarifying questions (1-5 mins): All members (optional)
- Share experience and advice (10-15 mins): All
- Summarize advice (1-2 minutes): Leading member or Moderator

Note: Make sure to involve as many people as you can (that's where the gallery view is important)